

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 were pending. Claims 2, 9, 13, and 17 are canceled and claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 12, 14, 15 and 16 are amended. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-8, 10-12, and 14-16 are currently pending. No new matter has been added by the amendment. Reconsideration and reconsideration of the present application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the present application. The Examiner's Office Action dated March 31, 2003 has been received and the contents carefully noted.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 2 because of informalities. The objection of claim 2 is now moot in view of the cancellation of the claim.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 5-9, 12, and 16 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Sakai (US Publication No. 2001/0012563), rejected claims 2 and 13 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Chan (US Patent No. 5,578,347), rejected claims 3 and 14 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Chan and further in view of Meng (US Patent No. 5,061,395), objected to claims 4 and 15 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and allowed claims 10 and 11.

The rejection of claims 1, 5-9, 12, and 16 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Sakai is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is allowable at least for the reason that claim 1 recites a combination of features including, for example,

“...removing impurities from a surface of the metal plating layer after the formation of the basecoat layer and the metal plating layer, wherein the impurity removing includes disintegrating the impurities by applying an acetic acid to the surface of the metal plating layer or immersing the surface of the metal plating layer in the acetic acid...” [emphasis added]

Claim 4 is allowable at least for the reason that claim 4 recites a combination of features including, for example,

“...removing impurities from the surface of the metal plating layer after the formation of the basecoat layer and the metal plating layer, wherein the impurity removing includes adsorbing the impurities by applying a protein dispersed solution to the surface of the metal plating layer or immersing the surface of the metal plating layer in the solution...” [emphasis added]

Claim 5 is allowable at least for the reason that claim 5 recites a combination of features including, for example,

“...forming an antioxidant film on the surface of the metal plating layer after the impurity removing, wherein the antioxidant film forming includes coating of the surface of the metal plating layer with a metal surface treatment agent...” [emphasis added]

Claim 8 is allowable at least for the reason that claim 8 recites a combination of features including, for example,

“...forming an antioxidant film on a surface of the metal plating layer after the formation of the metal plating layer, wherein the antioxidant film forming includes coating of the surface of the metal plating layer with a metal surface treatment agent for obtaining the antioxidant film...” [emphasis added]

Claim 12 is allowable at least for the reason that claim 12 recites a combination of features including, for example,

“...removing impurities from the surface of the metal plating layer after the formation of the basecoat layer and the metal plating layer, wherein the impurity removing includes disintegrating the impurities by applying an acetic acid to the surface of the metal plating layer or immersing the surface of the metal plating layer in the acetic acid...” [emphasis added]

Claim 15 is allowable at least for the reason that claim 15 recites a combination of features including, for example,

“...removing impurities from the surface of the metal plating layer after the formation of the basecoat layer and the metal plating layer, wherein the impurity removing includes adsorbing the impurities by applying a protein dispersed solution to the surface of the metal plating layer or immersing the surface of the metal plating layer in the solution...” [emphasis added]

Claim 16 is allowable at least for the reason that claim 16 recites a combination of features including, for example,

“...forming an antioxidant film on the surface of the metal plating layer after the impurity removing, wherein the antioxidant film forming includes coating of the surface of the metal plating layer with a metal surface treatment agent for obtaining the antioxidant film...” [emphasis added]

None of the cited references teaches or suggests each and every element of the claims. None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least these features of the claimed invention.

The Sakai reference discloses a laminated body including a plastic base 1, an alkyd resin undercoat 2, a silver-plated layer 3, a lower topcoat layer of polyester polyol 4, and an upper topcoat layer of polyester polyol containing a di-isocyanate 5. Washing silver nitrate and a solution of reducing agent with pure water produces the silver plated layer 3. *See* page 2, paragraph 0027 and page 3, paragraph 0038.

In contrast with the present invention, since Sakai uses pure water to remove undesired particles, Sakai cannot remove impurities that cause discoloring the surface of the silver plating layer to a yellowish tone as discussed on page 8 of the present application. Sakai does not remove impurities by using an acetic acid as recited in claims 1 and 12, by adsorbing the

impurities by applying a protein dispersed solution to the surface of the metal plating layer or immersing the surface of the metal plating layer in the solution as recited in claims 4 and 15, and by forming an antioxidant film on the surface of the metal plating layer with a metal surface treatment agent for obtaining the antioxidant film as recited in claims 5, 8, and 16. It can thus be understood that the Sakai disclosure does not in any way anticipate or make obvious the essential features of the present invention as set out in independent claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 12, 15, and 16.

Therefore, as the cited references fail to anticipate the present invention as recited in independent claim 1, 5, 8, 12, and 16, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these claims under 35 USC 102(e) be withdrawn.

Moreover, as claims 6, 7, 10, and 11 each depend from independent claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 12, 15, and 16, each of these claims is also allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims.

The rejection of claims 2 and 13 will not be discussed since the rejection is now moot in view of the cancellation of these claims. The rejection of claims 3 and 14 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakai in view of Chan and further in view of Meng is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner cites Chan in an attempt to cure the deficiencies of Sakai. Chan teaches finishing or coating a metal surface by applying a thin film of an adhesion promoter to the metal surface before the subsequent application of pigmented coatings. The metal surface is cleaned with a material, such as an acid. *See* column 4, line 48 to column 5, line 34. However, Chan fails to disclose cleaning the metal with an acetic acid much less with a weight % as recited in claims 3 and 14.

The Examiner cites Meng in an attempt to cure the deficiencies of Sakai and Chan.

Meng may teach cleaning metal with an acid such as an alkaline, however, Meng fails to disclose cleaning the metal with an acetic acid much less with a weight % as recited in claims 3 and 14.

It can thus be understood that the combination of references does not in any way make obvious the essential features of the present invention as set out in dependent claims 3 and 14.

Claims 1 and 12 have been amended by incorporating the features of canceled claims 2 and 13, respectively. Since dependent claims 3 and 14 further limit the features of independent claims 1 and 12, claims 3 and 14 are also allowable for the same reasons as discussed above in reference to claims 1 and 12.

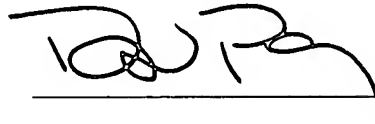
As the combination of references fails to render the present invention as recited in dependent claims 3 and 14 obvious, Applicants respectfully requests that the rejection of these claims under 35 USC 103(a) be withdrawn.

The Examiner should note that Applicants have re-written objected to claims 4 and 15 in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are now in allowable form.

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claims 10 and 11.

In view of the above remarks, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. A prompt notice to that effect is respectfully requested. Although no additional fees are believed to be due, permission is hereby given to charge any unforeseen fees to deposit account 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DGP', is written over a horizontal line.

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